

# Governor Carney Signs \$4.4 Billion Fiscal Year 2020 Budget

## *Budget invests in education, limits budget growth, and bolsters reserves*

**DOVER, Del.** – Governor John Carney on Tuesday signed a \$4.4 billion Fiscal Year 2020 budget plan that limits operating budget growth to 4.2 percent, invests in education, and gives state employees a raise, while setting aside more than \$100 million in projected reserves.

The budget signed by Governor Carney will fund a \$100 million, three-year plan to invest in Delaware's most vulnerable students, and highest-needs schools. Governor Carney's Opportunity Funding initiative will provide additional, targeted resources for low-income students and English learners, while setting aside additional funding for mental health and literacy supports.

*Read full details on Fiscal Year 2020 investments below.*

"This is a responsible budget that focuses on Delaware's future, with important investments in education, in our state employees, and in health care," said **Governor Carney**. "We are making historic investments in the students who need our help the most, funding well-deserved raises for our state employees and educators, and fully funding important services for Delawareans and Delaware families who rely on them every day. Importantly, we also set aside additional reserves, to protect Delaware taxpayers from future budget cuts. I want to thank

members of the General Assembly, and specifically the members of the Joint Finance Committee, for their work on this budget plan, and their continued partnership on behalf of the people of Delaware.”

Governor Carney introduced his recommended budget in January, and members of the General Assembly approved the budget this week. Members of the Delaware Senate voted to approve the Fiscal Year 2020 plan on Tuesday afternoon. The Delaware House of Representatives approved the budget on June 20.

“We work hard to make sure that the First State’s budget matches the values that define our state and the mission our constituents send us here to accomplish,” said **Senate President Pro Tempore David McBride**. “Ten years out from the worst of the Great Recession, I’m proud to report that the General Assembly continues to maintain a ledger that spends wisely, collects more revenue in an equitable way, saves for the future, and prepares Delaware for a bright future of fiscal health.”

“This budget is the result of months of hard work from the members of the Joint Finance Committee, staff and the countless advocates who come to Legislative Hall to make their case for many worthwhile programs,” said **Representative Quinn Johnson**, who chairs the budget-writing Joint Finance Committee. “Delaware’s operating budget touches nearly every resident across the state, and we are proud to have put together a spending plan that maintains our core state services and even increases funding to many of these programs. We’ve added funding for providers that care for our state’s most vulnerable populations and have pledged to continue work on improving funding in more consistent and sustainable levels. We have an obligation to try to help our residents whenever possible, and I think we have done that while being fiscally responsible.”

## ***Fiscal Year 2020 Budget Highlights:***

- General Fund Operating budget totals \$4.4 billion, limiting growth to **4.2%**
- Sets aside over \$100 million in reserves (*after projected cash to bond bill and grant in aid*)
- Appropriates \$62 million toward one-time items in a separate supplemental appropriation bill
- Funds “door openers” such as:
  - \$19.5 million for K-12 enrollment growth
  - \$14.6 million for salary steps (Education, DSP, DTCC, agency)
  - \$9.4 million for pupil transportation
  - \$9.8 million for Medicaid growth
  - \$2.2 million for debt service
  - \$1.3 million for elections machine maintenance
  - \$1.1 million for inmate medical/pharmacy inflation

## **IMPROVING OUR SCHOOLS**

### ***Investing \$100 million in High-Needs Schools***

- **Opportunity Funding:** \$75 million over three years for:
  - \$20 million/year in weighted funding for low-income students and English learners (EL) across all grade levels
  - \$5.0 million/year to provide mental health and reading supports for grades K-5
  - \$500,000 to evaluate the results of this program and identify best practices
- **Providing Resources for Early Grades – Student Success Block Grant:** \$26 million over a three year period for the following:
  - \$4.5 million/year in support for K-3 Basic Special

## Education

- \$4.0 million/year to provide an estimated 45 reading teachers targeted to elementary schools with high percentages of students in poverty
- \$350,000/year to establish Wellness Centers in elementary schools

## ***Investing in the Classroom***

- \$1 million for yearlong residencies to prepare incoming teachers and improve retention in high-needs schools
- \$850,000 for the DE Literacy Plan providing professional development and micro-credential bonus
- \$560,000 to provide 4 additional middle school math coaches bringing the total funding for this program to \$1.6 million

## ***Investing in Educators***

- Funding for annual salary steps for educators, plus a 2% general salary increase
- \$500,000 to expand High Needs Educator Student Loan Forgiveness Program, bringing the total funding for this program to \$700,000
- \$347,600 to restore National Board certification premium

## ***Investing in Early Education***

- \$3.8 million to continue support for Delaware's early learning centers
- \$6.7 million to maintain access to quality early learning through Delaware STARS

## ***Investing in the City of Wilmington***

- Continued support of \$1.5 million for the Christina School District schools located in the City of Wilmington

## ***Continued Support for Higher Education Institutions***

- \$2.2 million for SEED and Inspire program growth and for the expansion of SEED to post-associate's degree
- \$1.5 million for the Higher Education Land Grant/Workforce Development Matching Fund to match federal land grant appropriations or support academic programs that address critical workforce needs in the State
- \$1.7 million for the University of Delaware to support in-state students and the Cooperative Extension program
- \$538,800 to expand grant opportunities for women athletes and support for the nursing program at Delaware State University
- \$1.1 million for the Delaware Technical Community College RN to BSN program, diesel mechanic program, pathways partnerships, enrollment and financial aid support and phase in of a retention and compensation plan

## **A STRONG AND STABLE STATE WORKFORCE**

### ***Investing in State Workers and Educators***

- \$1,000 annual raise for state workers
- Successfully completed negotiations with several collective bargaining units
- 2% raise for educators and bus drivers statewide, on top of annual step increases

### ***Recruiting and Retaining Quality Employees***

- \$150,000 for the First State Quality Improvement Fund
- \$85,000 for recruitment and retention efforts

## ***High Needs Area – Public Safety***

- \$1.5 million in additional funding for the second year implementation of the Department of Correction Independent Review recommendations
- \$508,600 and 18.0 FTEs for pending legislation expanding the availability of expungement for selected categories of adult arrests and convictions (SS1 to SB 37)

## ***High Needs Area – Children's Services***

- \$3.3 million to add 34 casework staff and contractual support in the Division of Family Services
- \$5.0 million in a contingency to address department-wide caseload growth

## **A Healthier Delaware**

### ***Supporting Those who Serve Delawareans with Disabilities***

- \$4.2 million for contractual increases for partners providing services to those with disabilities
- \$3.6 million for attendant care services waiting list

### ***Continued Health Coverage for Children***

- \$3.2 million for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) due to decreased federal funding

### ***Addressing Prevention, Treatment, Resilience and Recovery of Mental Health, including substance use and co-occurring disorders***

- \$2.9 million for a Behavioral Health Consortium Contingency

## ***Providing Basic Services to the Medicaid Population***

- \$1.3 million for Medicaid Dental services

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